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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MARR NATO
SUBJECT: US NOMINATION FOR POST OF GENERAL MANAGER OF THE CENTRAL EUROPE OPERATING AGENCY (CEOA)

REF: STATE 007547, 112059Z JAN 78
SUMMARY. MESSAGE PROVIDES OUR EVALUATION DRAWN FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHANCES OF AN OBJECTIVE CONSIDERATION OF A US CANDIDACY FOR THE POST OF GENERAL MANAGER, CEOA. END SUMMARY.

1. WE AGREE THAT JOHN NOLAN WOULD BE AN EXCELLENT GENERAL MANAGER FOR THE CEOA IF WE ARE ABLE TO SURMOUNT EUROPEAN PREJUDICE AGAINST A US NOMINEE FOR THAT HIGH-LEVEL POST. WE HAVE BEEN CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH MR. NOLAN FOR SEVERAL YEARS IN OUR COORDINATION OF THE US POSITION CONCERNING THE CENTRAL EUROPE PIPELINE SYSTEM (CEPS), AND HENCE KNOW HIM TO BE FULLY CONVERSANT WITH THE NATO PROBLEMS.

2. WE HAVE SOUGHT CORRIDOR DISCUSSIONS WITH SELECTED CENTRAL EUROPE PIPELINE POLICY COMMITTEE (CEPPC) MEMBERS TO DETERMINE POSSIBLE SUCCESS OF NOLAN'S CANDIDACY AND
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SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING:

A. CANADA WOULD WELCOME A STRONG US CANDIDATE IN ORDER TO BREAK THE PAST BENELUX REGIME WHICH HAS NOT ALWAYS AFFORDED QUALIFIED GENERAL MANAGERS.

B. UK, AS AN OFF-SHORE NATION, WOULD LIKELY TAKE A

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POSITION SIMILAR TO THAT OF CANADA.

C. NETHERLANDS WOULD NOT WELCOME A CHANGE IN WHAT THEY CONSIDER THE "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" FAVORING THE BENE-LUX SINCE THE NETHERLANDS' TURN HAS COME TO SUPPLY A GENERAL MANAGER. THERE IS SOME SPECULATION THAT MR. HOFMAN, EX-DUTCH MEMBER OF CEPPC AND CHAIRMAN OF CEPPC FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS, MIGHT BE THE DUTCH CANDIDATE.

D. FRANCE HAS TAKEN AN AMBIGUOUS POSITION IN NOTING THAT WHEREAS FRANCE WOULD NOT OBJECT TO A US GENERAL MANAGER IF HE WERE SUPERBLY QUALIFIED, THE BREAKING OF THE SO-CALLED "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" MIGHT INSPIRE NOMINATIONS FROM OTHER NATIONS SUCH AS THE FRG, WHICH FRANCE WOULD NOT WELCOME. IN ADDITION, THE FRENCH REP TO THE CEPPC SUGGESTED A GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION PRO-BLEM IF THE US SHOULD HOLD THE GENERAL MANAGER AND THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE POSTS. WHEN US REP (LOVELAND) POINTED OUT THAT A SIMILAR CASE EXISTED DURING THE BELGIAN INCUMBENCIES, THIS POINT WAS DROPPED.

2. THE BELGIANS, AS THE BENEFICIARIES WITH THE NETHERLANDS OF THE CURRENT SYSTEM, ARE KNOWN TO PREFER RETENTION OF THE CURRENT ROTATION BETWEEN THOSE TWO COUNTRIES. WE DID NOT APPROACH THE FRG REP BUT DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD OBJECT TO A US CANDIDATE ALTHOUGH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEY MIGHT, AS FEARED BY FRANCE, FOLLOW OUR EXAMPLE. WE BELIEVE THAT WE COULD COUNT ON STRONG CANADIAN SUPPORT AND AT LEAST INITIAL UK SUPPORT OF OUR RIGHT TO PRESENT A CANDIDATE. WE ARE EQUALLY CERTAIN THAT THE BENELUX WOULD OPPOSE A US NOMINEE. IN SUMMARY, IT APPEARS THAT WE COULD INSIST ON OUR RIGHT TO PRESENT A CANDIDATE AND EXPECT THAT HIS QUALIFICATIONS BE CONSIDERED OBJECTIVELY BY THE EVALUATION TEAM. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT ANY US CANDIDATE WOULD HAVE TO BE FAR SUPERIOR TO A BENELUX CANDIDATE TO HOPE TO ACHIEVE A MAJORITY PREFERENCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT APPEARS CERTAIN THAT THE NOMINATION OF A CANDIDATE OF NOLAN'S STATURE WOULD SERVE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE EVENTUAL DUTCH NOMINEE.

3. WE SEE ONE DRAWBACK TO THE PRESENTATION OF A US CAN-DIDATE IN THAT NOMINATING NATIONS WILL NOT BE INCLUDED ON THE SELECTION PANEL AND HENCE WE WOULD HAVE TO RELY ON OBJECTIVE VIEWS BY OTHERS. THE FRENCH REP BROUGHT OUT THIS PARTICULAR DRAWBACK IN REGRETTING THAT HE WOULD NOT BE AIDED BY THE GENERALLY OBJECTIVE APPROACH OF US MEMBERS IN THE EVALUATION.

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4. REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS. BENNETT

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